



## **Steering Committee Draft - Committee Meeting Summary**

**June 12, 2001**

*The following is a summary of presentations given, issues raised, actions undertaken or recommendations made. When possible, lengthy discussions have been summarized into themes or summary statements.*

### **Steering Committee Members Present:**

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peter Beaulieu<br>PSRC                                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sandra Meyer<br>City of Renton    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Leonard<br>FHWA                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Leonard<br>FHWA                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Mick Monken<br>City of Woodinville           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bernard Van deKamp<br>City of Bellevue |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian O'Sullivan<br>Sound Transit           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bill Barlow<br>Community Transit  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leonard Newstrum<br>Yarrow Point       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jonathan Friedman<br>U.S. EPA                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Terra Hegy<br>WA Fish & Wildlife             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don Cairns<br>City of Redmond          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Arndt<br>City of Kirkland               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Johannes Kurz<br>Snohomish County | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eddie Low<br>City of Bothell           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nancy Brennan-Dubbs<br>U.S. Fish & Wildlife | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ann Martin<br>King County         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Witmer<br>FTA                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dan Drais<br>FTA                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Kim Becklund<br>City of Bellevue             | <input type="checkbox"/> Seyed Safavian<br>City of Bothell                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mitch Wasserman<br>City of Clyde Hill                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Bob Sokol<br>City of Kenmore                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Don Wickstrom<br>City of Kent                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bill Vlcek<br>City of Lynnwood                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Debra Symmonds<br>City of Mercer Island      | <input type="checkbox"/> Kevin Gross<br>City of Newcastle                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Therese Swanson<br>WA Dept. of Ecology      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sharon Griffin<br>Hunts Point                | <input type="checkbox"/> Jim Morrow<br>City of Tukwila                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dan Burke<br>Port of Seattle                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paul Carr<br>PSCAA                | <input type="checkbox"/> Barbara Gilliland<br>Sound Transit                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chuck Chappell<br>FHWA                                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phil Fordyce<br>WSDOT             | <input type="checkbox"/> Jack Kennedy<br>U.S. Army Corps                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tom Gibbons<br>NMFS                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Allyson Brooks<br>WA Dept. CT&E              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greg Zimmerman<br>City of Renton       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> King Cushman<br>PSRC                        |   |  |

## **Staff and Observers**

### **Project Management Team**

Mike Cummings, WSDOT  
Don Samdahl, Mirai Associates  
Ron Anderson, DEA

Keith McGowan, McGowan Environmental  
Paul Bergman, PRR

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Michael Cummings, WSDOT, called the meeting to order at 1:37 p.m. and reviewed the focus of the meeting with the members:

- Update on program status and schedule
- Funding and Phasing Subcommittee update
- Environmental Process update
- BNSF Right-of-Way preservation
- Preliminary Preferred Alternative – Transit, TDM, Central Core HCT Elements

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment requested or given.

### **PROGRAM UPDATE**

Mr. Cummings gave a spring – summer speakers bureau update. Upcoming briefings include Bellevue Rotary on June 19 and Kenndale Neighborhood Association on July 25.

Mr. Cummings reviewed the schedule change due to the delay in issuing the Draft EIS. The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for July 26. The focus will be environmental issues and analysis. A brown bag meeting will be scheduled in early September for all the committees to group and discuss public comments. The brown bag is for discussion purposes only; no decisions will be made. Mr. Cummings emphasized that the schedule is dependant on the DEIS being released on time. He noted that the team is currently addressing issues that might result in a further schedule delays.

Mr. Cummings reviewed the DEIS recommendation process. Kim Becklund asked for a definition of “design guidelines” within the recommendation process. Mr. Cummings said that “design guidelines” include mitigation, right-of-way, guide of planning and design of facilities and projects that come out of the program.

Mr. Cummings noted that the funding and phasing subcommittee has had very good participation. The subcommittee is currently working on implementing a task list to address community inquiries. The list includes:

- Developing key messages for use
  - 1 to 2 page handout
  - 10 minute presentation
- Organizing partners to deliver message
- Will be meeting with community groups:
  - Business
  - Environmental
  - User groups (Freight)
  - Government (Legislature, Governor, etc.)

Mr. Cummings said that a meeting will be held on July 10 and asked Steering Committee members to advise him if their Executive Committee representatives would like to be a part of it. A major priority of the meeting is to learn of the issues various environmental groups, including 1000 Friends and Transportation Choices.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE**

Mr. Cummings gave an environmental process update on recent jurisdictional mitigation meetings. He noted that the committees are not necessarily agreeing with all of the issues and are not yet taking a stand on them. The committees are going to work with the groups and agencies to define a program that makes sense for the corridor.

Recommended potential strategies that could be included in the mitigation concept include:

- Take a watershed approach to mitigation, looking outside the project boundary when possible

- Take recommendations from the watershed limiting factors analysis reports and the sub-basin reports
- Use mitigation funds for priority projects that acquire/preserve existing habitat and flood conveyance sites, reconnect fragmented habitat, and restore habitat
- Consider using mitigation funds to correct basin-wide stormwater problems
- Partner with WRIA groups, local governments, etc.

Individual projects that could potentially be used for compensatory mitigation and partnership opportunities were also identified. Any comments or questions should be sent to Bruce Smith who will be developing the mitigation enhancement program.

Mr. Cummings gave an environmental process update of the June 4 resource agency meeting. The following items were discussed at the Olympia meeting:

- Process and schedule for reaching a preferred alternative
- Update on the strategy for developing a mitigation concept
- General concerns regarding the program, mitigation concept strategy and DEIS

Additional meetings will be scheduled with the agencies to further discuss their questions/issues. Sandra Manning emphasized that local governments will be a critical part of the mitigation process.

### **BNSF RIGHT-OF-WAY PRESERVATION**

The Steering Committee has been asked by the Executive Committee to make a recommendation regarding the City of Renton's objection to its portion of the BNSF Right-of-Way preservation in the preliminary preferred alternative. The recommendation will be presented at the next Executive meeting on June 28.

The Steering Committee has the following options:

- No change
- Remove entire corridor
- Remove Renton area

None of the options are currently in the preferred alternative.

Background-BNSF represents:

- < 5% of program cost
- < .01% of travel (dinner train)

Mr. Cummings asked the committee to note that the Citizen Committee had not recommended a BNSF preservation. Jim Arndt asked why it had not been recommended. Mr. Cummings said he believed it was because the Citizen Committee had thought the preservation would confuse the issue of the program. Due to the additional cost of the preservation, the committee wanted to concentrate on other options. However, the Steering Committee did include the preservation in its recommendation.

Mr. Cummings said that Renton mentioned it would not object if its portion of the right-of-way was used for long trails. However, long trails are not currently included in the PPA.

Mr. Cummings said the committee's recommendation would only be for amending the PPA, not deciding the PA.

Greg Zimmerman clarified Renton's stance. He said that the preservation recommendation snuck up on Renton. He said that even though he is a part of the Steering Committee, he wasn't aware the committee was going to make the recommendation and didn't find out until after the Executive Committee had made the PPA announcement. Sandra Meyer said originally the preservation was only discussed in general, not specifically. Mr. Cummings said the preservation is still only being discussed in general.

Mr. Zimmerman said there is a strong public outcry from Renton citizens against the BNSF, especially from Kenndale, because of the possible use of HCT in its section. Mr. Zimmerman said that the preservation is too open-ended in that it doesn't detail if HCT will or won't be used. Therefore it's possible that the BNSF will bisect Kenndale. Mr. Zimmerman said that the BNSF preservation is the only element in the PPA that isn't specific. He said that he doesn't know what to "sell" Renton residents. He said at this stage of the program it is important to be specific so residents know what they are deciding on.

He stated that there are residents within a few feet of the railway as well as a major park and that HCT would degrade the neighborhood. Mr. Zimmerman also pointed out that costly grade separation would be necessary to avoid traffic problems in downtown Renton due to the BNSF.

Johannes Kurz said that the incentive for the BNSF inclusion is to avoid having parts of the railway purchased by separate entities and ruining the opportunity for future use. He said that if they don't buy the whole railway now, it would not be available in the future.

Mr. Zimmerman said that design features are possible but even an elevated system would have negative effects on Kenndale. Renton is not in opposition to other parts of the BNSF outside of the city. It also does not object to the right-of-way in the city as long as it's limited to pedestrian or bike usage. However, he emphasized that Renton is strongly opposed to open-ended preservation.

Dan Drais said that regardless of what the committee recommends, it would only be in regards to the PPA and not the PA. Mr. Zimmerman disagreed and said that if the BNSF is included in the PPA, it will be hard to eliminate later from inclusion in the PA. He said that now is the time to debate the issue.

Bernard Van deKamp said he would prefer to keep the BNSF in the PPA because they are not sure how well BRT is going to work in the program. It is too early to decide whether or not the BNSF will be needed for this.

Bill Barlow said the BNSF is important because it lets people know the committees are leaning more towards future transit options rather than widening roads. If the Renton area is excluded from the BNSF then it doesn't make sense to preserve it at all. The key areas will no longer be connected when a relief valve is needed in the far future.

Ms. Martin argued that the committee is getting ahead of where they are in the program. They are currently only saving options for usage, not defining what the usage is going to be. She said, in general, the BNSF preservation is important.

King Cushman suggested that the BNSF remain in the PPA but to also record Renton's preference that the right-of-way be used for a trail.

Mr. Kurz disagreed. He said if the Renton's preference is recorded, the project might be held to it. However, he emphasized that when the usage is decided in the future, Renton will have a strong say at that time.

Kim Becklund stated the committee needs to realize the sensitivity of the issue to Kenndale and offer a strong mitigation commitment.

Mr. Zimmerman said Renton's preference is to concentrate on I-405, not the BNSF, linking the key areas of the corridor.

Phil Fordyce recommended keeping the BNSF in the PPA as is, but researching the impacts it will have on Renton and forwarding them to the Executive Committee. He suggested the research include difference in costs depending on which options will be used along the BNSF.

He said Renton should keep in mind that they will need a way to connect Port Quendall and other future developments.

Mr. Cummings asked if the committee would agree to include a statement regarding Renton's objections to the BNSF on the PPA slide so it would be on record. Meanwhile the team would gather more information which would be presented to the committee before the issue was resolved for the PA recommendation.

Ms. Martin said that clarification that the BNSF preservation is for a "transportation corridor" is important.

Mr. Cummings asked if anyone wanted the Renton portion of the BNSF right-of-way eliminated. Mr. Zimmerman and Ms. Meyer raised their hands.

Mr. Cummings said that analysis of the BNSF-usage options is expensive. He also said that the committee shouldn't over-concentrate on the issue because it might detract from the major focus of the program.

Ms. Meyer asked if HCT along the BNSF would be removed if the research finds that HCT along I-405 is adequate. Mr. Fordyce said the research will not be in depth enough to decide this, but will provide more analysis than the committee has now.

Leonard Newstrum asked when Phase 2 of the decision would be. Brian O'Sullivan said it's targeted for November 2004. Between now and then, the regional vision needs to be updated.

Mr. Cummings said the Steering Committee's decision regarding the BNSF would be drafted and forwarded to the Executive Committee. The Steering Committee will have the opportunity to review the draft beforehand.

#### **PRELIMINARY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE – TRANSIT, TDM, CENTRAL CORE HCT COMPONENTS**

Mr. Cummings handed the meeting over to Don Samdahl who reviewed the topics of the PPA which to be covered:

- Review components and rationale
- System and community level issues identified
- Discussion on system level issues

Mr. Samdahl mentioned that project level decisions will be recorded but they will not be dealt with until later.

Mr. Samdahl handed the meeting to John Shadoff to lead an overview of the program's TDM components. TDM Program Elements included the following:

- Vanpooling
- Public Information, Education and Promotion
- Employer-based programs
- Land use TDM
- Innovative TDM strategies

Mr. Shadoff also addressed the pricing for Alternative 1 only. The following are the results of the scenario tested:

- Increase cost of driving – adds about \$0.20 - \$0.25 per mile (High gas tax? Mileage charge?)
- Vary by time of day and congestion levels
- Potential effect on vehicle miles of travel – up to 15% reduction on a daily basis

He said that the price estimates were difficult due to lack of hard data. Anne Martin asked if the alternatives were included in the model numbers of the EIS. Mr. Shadoff said they were not.

Mr. Shadoff also gave a TDM Budget Breakdown by Element:

- Core Program – 4%
- Vanpooling – 35%
- Public Information and Education – 8%
- Employer-Based Strategies – 40%
- Land Use – 5%
- Other TDM Programs – 8%

Mr. Shadoff said the team took efforts not to double count the numbers. The numbers given are conservative.

Phil Fordyce asked what employers were targeted for this program. Mr. Shadoff said 200 large employers are in the corridor but the program could be taken down to any size employer. Right now, the program is required for any company over 100 employees.

Mr. Shadoff said the team would be double-checking 20 year operating costs. Len Newstrum asked if the team had considered the cost-effectiveness of the suggested programs. Mr. Shadoff said it's an issue of balance. An ongoing Steering Committee will be overseeing the TDM project and will be able to shift money from one component to the other.

Mr. Shadoff reviewed the following most recent agencies and jurisdictions the team has met with to discuss the program's TDM components:

- King County Metro
- Community Transit
- Bellevue
- Bothell
- Redmond

The following are some concerns that the agencies voiced to the team:

- Stress how TDM supports the other I-405 Corridor Program elements - e.g. HOV Systems, Bus and HCT, TSM
- Ensure flexibility in TDM strategies, especially at local level.
- What about adding funding support for GPS locational equipment on buses? And funding for variable message signs?
- How do we ensure that the non-capital portions of the TDM Program get funded?
- Increase funding for:
  - -TDM targeted at non-work trips
  - -Personalized trip planning (more computer support)
  - -Land use incentives and support
  - -Leased Park & Ride lots
  - -Connectively Retrofit Grants
- Would it make more sense to divert some TDM funds to provide more bus service?
- If at some point in the future it becomes clear that disincentives are needed, what is the mechanism for having them considered?

The following TDM work is underway:

- Developing Implementation Plans:
  - -TDM as Construction Mitigation
  - -Implementing full TDM Program
- Beginning new Land Use/TDM Research
  - -Inventorying TDM in local plans, policies, regulations and processes

- -Developing plan for interlocal Trip Reduction Agreements

Eddie Low asked if money has been budgeted to help with the local levels. Mr. Shadoff said there has been in several cases.

The presentation was returned to Mr. Samdahl who noted that Mark Schiebe would be assisting him on the presentation on Transit System Performance and Park and Ride Lot Demand by area (North, South, and Central). The following are based on 2007 numbers and reflect that results of the weeding out of added stops that didn't service enough people to be worthwhile.

Mr. Schiebe noted that the difference between BRT stations and transit centers are that BRT stations are located directly on a BRT route. BRT stations are locations where you can access high capacity transit. Buses would stop at each station and there would be some feeder routes to provide service on local streets. Transit centers are places where several transit routes come together.

The team focused on facilitating travel within local routes in the study area.

Ms. Martin asked if the analysis was based on the PPA. Mr. Schiebe said yes.

The following comments have been received by program area:

#### North

- How will BRT serve the UW Campus area, particularly at NE 195<sup>th</sup>?
- Add transit center for Woodinville
- Possible BRT connections to BNSF at Totem Lake?
- Use BNSF alignment through Kirkland for BRT?
- Willows Rd Park and Ride location doesn't make much sense

Bernard Van deKamp noted that a HOV connection along SR 520 is missing from the map.

Mr. Newstrum asked what kind of vehicles would be used. Mr. Schiebe said it will depend on the demand.

A meeting observer asked how the team developed the forecast of demand for Park and Rides. Mr. Schiebe said the team used other studies as prototypes.

Mr. Schiebe said the team will be exploring the expansion of Kirkland's Park and Ride.

#### Central

- How would BRT connection be handled at NE 85<sup>th</sup> St?
- Match transit system concept to Bellevue Transit Plan
- Further define 'Core HCT' (see later part of presentation)
- Transit/HOV connection at Factoria

#### South

- Describe BRT concept through downtown Renton
- Add BRT/HOV connection to I-405 to/from downtown Renton at SR 167 (done)
- Add BRT/HOV connection to Tukwila commuter rail station (done)
- Clarify Park and Ride needs/locations in Tukwila

Mr. Schiebe said the team would be studying other options regarding Renton and transit programs. Mr. Newstrum said a stop at the end of the freeway would be good idea. Sandra Meyer said this had been discussed at length. She said there needs to be more consideration of



the issue of BRT route going through downtown Renton. She said the team needs to come up with more options, such as allowing some stops in SeaTac instead.

Mr. Samdahl discussed the findings of HOV Usage research conducted:

- Before 2020, peak hour HOV 2+ demand will exceed capacity of a single HOV lane
- HOV 3+ volumes will be less than capacity in all sections, leaving spare capacity for transit
- Highest demand from Bellevue south

Mr. Newstrum asked if HOV direct connections have been studied in the south end. Ron Anderson said there are several studies going on and they will share the feedback. Mr. Fordyce requested that a BRT system along SR 67 be explored.

Jim Leonard asked what how the team defined “capacity?” Are hours or speed counted? Mr. Samdahl said capacity relates to speed. Mr. Leonard asked if the lane would be made so people would feel comfortable going more than 15 mph than vehicles in the other lanes.

Mr. Samdahl said they would discuss the managed lane concepts in the future.

The following are comments received regarding HOV usage:

- How would BRT function within HOV lane
- Is there enough capacity in HOV lane?
- Is there exclusivity for transit?
- How would a managed lane concept affect the BRT concept?

Mr. Newstrum asked at what point 3+ HOV lanes would reach capacity. Mr. Samdahl said they would be looking into this question in the future.

Mr. Samdahl turned the meeting over to Brian O’Sullivan who reviewed the elements of the Core HCT eastside. The concept is the same, as Trans-Lake, in that it isn’t currently proposing many specific details.

The Executive Committee PPA Core Eastside Recommendation is to “Examine a more automated high capacity transit (HCT) option for the central core of the study area (e.g. Bellevue and portions of Redmond/Kirkland) to tie into Trans-Lake travel being studied separately.”

The significance of the Core Eastside includes:

- Most densely developed, high employment section of corridor
- Transit service connects to urban centers of Bellevue, Kirkland, and Redmond to Seattle
- Area of heaviest projected future transit volumes

The Core Eastside HCT System might include:

- Integrated BRT/HOV system elements (Alt 3) such as stations, enhanced direct access, Park and Rides and transfer facilities for cross-lake transit routings.
- Incorporation of greater right of way exclusivity for BRT or other fixed guideway vehicles in all or selected portions of the core eastside, perhaps in association with opportunities on the BNSF right of way.
- Fully integrated service speed and reliability core HCT enhancements, aided by greater ROW exclusivity, with cross-lake transit services to Seattle via I-90 and or SR 520
- A “starter” core HCT system by 2020 featuring a mix of ROW exclusivity and technologies suited to transit markets within and across the I-405 Study areas.

Mr. O’Sullivan noted that some key considerations for a Core System include:

- Time to sort out the fit and phasing of HCT fixed guideway and/or BRT/HOV alternatives ultimately emerging from the Trans-Lake Study

- The extent to which the BNSF Row will be preserved and what segments can in fact be developed to better serve the projected HCT demand in the eastside core.
- A “higher order” HCT system suggests that greater transit vehicle ROX exclusivity may be warranted (regardless of technology) sometime before 2020.
- Planning for Sound Transit Phase 2 (2006-2016) HCT elements and the prospects for a positive Phase 2 Vote outcome in 2004.

Mr. Cummings resumed lead of the meeting. He said environmental impact issues would be covered in the next meeting.

He asked if the level of detail in today’s meeting was helpful. The committee responded positively.

Mr. Cummings asked the committee if they would like to add anything to next month’s agenda. Ms. Meyers asked when the committee would know what the bus system would look like. Mr. Cummings said they would have a concept soon but no details. The details will be up to Sound Transit. Mr. Samdahl said the committee members should advise if the bus system details were essential to their decision making process. If so, the details would be provided.

Mr. Cummings adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m.